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Bongo language

Bongo (Bungu), also known as *Dor*, is a Central Sudanic language spoken by the Bongo people in sparsely populated areas of Bahr al Ghazal in South Sudan.

A 2013 survey reported that ethnic Bongo reside in Bussere Boma, Bagari Payam, Wau County, South Sudan.[3]

Bongo	
Native to	South Sudan
Ethnicity	Bongo people
Native speakers	10,100 (2000)[1]
Language family	Nilo-Saharan? ▪ Central Sudanic ▪ Bongo–Bagirmi ▪ Bongo–Baka ▪ **Bongo**
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`bot`
Glottolog	`bong1285 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/bong1285)`[2]

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Tone

Bongo is tonal language that has the high (á), mid (ā), low (à) and falling (â) tones.

All falling tones occur on either long vowels or on vowel clusters or glides. When the tonal fall is not due to a preceding high tone, it can be indicated by a high tine followed by a low tone

Ton	Example	Translation
high	bʊ́	*hungry*
low	tɪ̀ɪ̀	*Pounded sesame*
falling	tââ /táà/	*when*

Numerals

Bongo has a quinary-vigesimal numeral system.[4]

Number	Bongo word
1	kɔ̀tʊ́
2	ŋgɔ̀r
3	mʊ̀tːà
4	ʔɛ́w
5	múì
6	dɔ̀kɔtʊ́
7	dɔ́ŋgɔr
8	dɔ̀mʊ́tːà
9	dɔ̀mʔɛ́w
10	kɪ̀ː
11	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) kɔ̀tʊ́
12	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) ŋgɔ̀r
13	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) mʊ̀tːà
14	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) ʔɛ́w
15	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) múì
16	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) dɔ̀kɔtʊ́
17	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) dɔ́ŋgɔr
18	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) dɔ̀mʊ́tːà
19	kɪː`(dɔ̀ː) dɔ̀mʔɛ́w
20	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́
21	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː kɔ̀tʊ́
22	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː ŋgɔ̀r
23	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː mʊ̀tːà
24	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː ʔɛ́w
25	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː múì
26	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː dɔ̀kɔtʊ́
27	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː dɔ́ŋgɔr
28	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː dɔ̀mʊ́tːà
29	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː dɔ̀mʔɛ́w
30	mbàba kɔ̀tʊ́ dɔ̀ː kɪ̀ː
40	mbàba ŋgɔ̀r
50	mbàba ŋgɔ̀r dɔ̀ː kɪ̀ː
60	mbàba mʊ̀tːà
70	

	mbàba mʊ̀tːà dɔ̀ː kɪ̀ː
80	mbàba ʔɛ́w
90	mbàba ʔɛ́w dɔ̀ː kɪ̀ː
100	mbàla múì
200	mbàba múì dɔ̀ː múì
1000	mbuda kɔ̀tʊ́
2000	mbuda ŋgɔ̀r

Scholarship

The first ethnologists to work with the Bongo language were John Petherick, who published Bongo word lists in his 1861 work, *Egypt, the Soudan, and Central Africa*; Theodor von Heuglin, who also published Bongo word lists in *Reise in das Gebiet des Weissen Nil, &c. 1862-1864* in 1869; and Georg August Schweinfurth, who contributed sentences and vocabularies in his *Linguistische Ergebnisse, Einer Reise Nach Centralafrika* in 1873.[5] E. E. Evans-Pritchard published additional Bongo word lists in 1937.[6]

More recent scholarship has been done by Eileen Kilpatrick, who published a phonology of Bongo in 1985.[7]

References

1. Bongo (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/bot/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Bongo" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/bong1285). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. "Village Assessment Survey" (https://iomsouthsudan.org/tracking/vas). International Organization for Migration South Sudan. 2013.
4. Bongo at Numeral Systems of the World's Languages (http://lingweb.eva.mpg.de/numeral/) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20140421165028/http://lingweb.eva.mpg.de/numeral/) 2014-04-21 at the Wayback Machine
5. *The Bongo.* Evans-Pritchard, E. E. Sudan Notes and Records (1929): 1-62.
6. *The non-Dinka peoples of the Amadi and Rumbek Districts.* Evans-Pritchard, E. E.. Sudan Notes and Records (1937): 156-158
7. *Bongo Phonology.* Eileen Kilpatrick. Occasional Papers in the Study of Sudanese Languages 4 (1985): 1-62.

Further reading

- *A Small Comparative Vocabulary of Bongo Baka Yulu Kara* Sodality of St Peter Claver, Rome, 1963.
- *A Reconstructed History of the Chari Languages - Bongo - Bagirmi - Sara. Segmental Phonology, with Evidence from Arabic Loanwords.* Linda Thayer, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1974. Typewritten thesis 309 pages. Copy held by J.A. Biddulph (Africanist publisher, Joseph Biddulph, Pontypridd, Wales).

External links

- Bongo at Gurtong (http://www.gurtong.net/Peoples/PeoplesProfiles/Bongo/tabid/187/Default.aspx)
- The Jesus Film in Bongo (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkajcuiRJWM)
- Bongo at WALS Online (http://wals.info/languoid/lect/wals_code_bgo)

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